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SIPDIS

AIDAC

DEPT HHS WASHDC, PRIORITY
CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY
USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
CJTF HOA PRIORITY
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY
USDA FAS WASHDC PRIORITY

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STATE FOR AF/E, AF/EPS, AF/PD, EB, PRM/AF, IO
AID FOR A/AID, AA/DCHA, WGARVELINK, LROGERS, MHESS,
DCHA/OTI,
DCHA/OFDA FOR GGOTTLIEB, MMARX, IMACNAIRN, KCHANNELL
DCHA/FFP FOR JDWORKEN, JDRUMMOND, TANDERSON, DNELSON,
SBRADLEY
AID/EGAT FOR AA/EGAT, JSCHAFFER, JTURK
AFR/EA FOR JBORNS, SMCCLURE
ADDIS ABABA FOR TIM STUFFT
DJIBOUTI FOR JSCHULMAN
ROME FOR FODAG
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER
NSC FOR JMELINE

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This is the fourth update cable in response to Ref A request for biweekly reports on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. USAID Missions in Kenya and Ethiopia, REDSO (Somalia, Djibouti), and OFDA/ECARO contributed to this report.

SPECIAL REPORT

1. Michael Hess, Assistant Administrator for DCHA, visited Kenya from April 7 - 13, on the first leg of a trip to Djibouti and Ethiopia to assess and bring attention to the drought and pastoralist crisis in the Horn of Africa. Mr. Hess traveled to the drought affected towns of Mandera and El Wak, and saw the situation firsthand. Although rains had started, there was recognition that this would not be enough to restore livelihoods, and recovery would take years, and also require some livelihood diversification. Mr. Hess also traveled to Makueni and Kitui, a marginal agriculture zone that showed not only northeast Kenya faced food security crises, where he saw water harvesting projects being implemented by USAID partners German Agro Action and ADRA. Mr. Hess met NGO, UN, GOK and donor officials to discuss drought response strategy recognizing that

long-term efforts to improve governance and reduce poverty were as equally important as the immediate response. A key issue that emerged was that information sharing and coordination needed to be improved. As an immediate activity, OFDA and REDSO will work with donors to undertake a mapping exercise of drought response to date.

COUNTRY REPORTS

12. KENYA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: The long-awaited long-rains have started in drought-affected northeastern pastoral districts and eastern marginal agricultural areas. Heavy rains have also been reported in most of the western, southern and coastal areas and some districts in northeastern and eastern Kenya. The heavy downpours resulted in flash floods around the Lake Victoria region and other areas including Nairobi, causing material damage to crops and household properties.

Although the start of the long-rains in the pastoralist areas is a positive indicator of a potential improvement in the current humanitarian crisis, it is too early to determine its overall effect on livelihoods. On the other hand, continuous heavy downpours could prevent the grass from sprouting, thereby, having little impact on improved pasture availability.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: More recent non-USG pledges to the WFP EMOP include \$3.6 million from UN/OCHA's recently established Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), \$740K from Australia, and \$170K from Belgium.

At present, over 46% of the total EMOP requirement (\$225 million) has been resourced. To date the FFP contribution towards the EMOP for FY 06 is 69,590MT valued at \$50 million, which includes the most recent contribution of \$18 million.

UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: The onset of the long-rains has brought some immediate relief to the pastoralists, as it reduced the trekking distance in search of water. However, well above normal (130 mm of rains was reported in Marsabit within 10 days) rains within one week has also resulted in an upsurge of livestock mortality due to pneumonia and other water borne diseases. Even if the long-rains are sustained throughout the season, the enormous detrimental effect of successive poor seasons, characterized by massive livestock mortality and loss of livelihoods, suggest that the vast majority of pastoralists will require longer-term livelihoods support to withstand future climatic shocks effectively and build resilience.

In addition to climatic factors, limited purchasing power, political marginalization (in the pastoralist context), limited livelihood options and vulnerability, and chronic poverty explain the "complex food insecurity" scenario in Kenya's ASAL region.

Reports indicate that the long-rains were also followed by an outbreak of armyworms in some coastal and high potential western districts. At least for the time being, the Ministry of Agriculture appears to have the situation under control, having supplied affected districts with chemicals and sprayers and monitoring the situation.

WFP reported that continued heavy downpours could disrupt relief food distributions in northeastern pastoral areas where infrastructure is extremely poor and some roads could become impassable.

OTHER TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST: Both the GOK and donors are taking this crisis as an opportunity to improve understanding of the factors underlying repeated food crises in the country and identifying new approaches and strategies to break the cycle of relief dependency. However, the high-level meeting on chronic vulnerability and recurrent drought which was planned to take place on April 11, 2006 has now been postponed until after the cabinet deliberates on the ASAL draft policy, expected to be tabled soon.

13. ETHIOPIA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: The Government of Ethiopia's (GOE) Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Agency (DPPA) has issued the final results of the reassessment conducted in March in the Borena Zone of the Oromiya Region. DPPA has raised the beneficiary figures to 343,600 beneficiaries, from the original 155,000. DPPA is also conducting reassessments in Afder and Liben Zones of the Somali Region. Results are expected within the next week. In Liben Zone, the

reassessment team is recommending beneficiary numbers be increased by 46,500, from 172,433, but the GOE has not yet approved or released the final beneficiary number.

USAID/Ethiopia's Pastoralist Livelihoods Initiative (PLI) partners have now vaccinated over 1.78 million animals against anthrax, pasteurellosis, petite ruminant pneumonia. A total of 219,000 animals were treated for parasites. PLI partners continue towards the goal of off-taking 153,000 animals from the market place by the end of May. Additionally, 3,000 animals have been restocked, and 86,000 animals are being fed or will be fed by the end of May in commercial herd maintenance programs.

Massive campaigns against measles, led by UNICEF, began the last week in March, and will vaccinate almost 900,000 children in drought affected areas. International NGOs are supporting the campaign to increase quality and coverage. The measles campaign is of great significance as measles has been a primary form of mortality in past droughts, particularly in the 2000 drought.

From April 3 to 7, 2006, a joint USG assessment team, consisting of a CDC Epidemiologist, USAID/OFDA Food Security Advisor, and USAID/Ethiopia Program Assistant traveled to drought-affected areas of Afder and Liban zones, Somali Region. At the time of the visit, it had just started raining, and this was expected to improve conditions for residents in the short-term. However, significant rainfall of sufficient quantity and duration, and several months time will be needed for pastoralists and their animals to rebound from the combined shocks of the recent jilaal dry season and the failed deyr rains that preceded it. Additional details of the assessment team's findings will be reported septel.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: FFP/W authorized an additional 12,250 metric tons to Save the Children USA to expand emergency relief food distributions in the Somali Region. The food will be distributed directly by Save/USA to beneficiaries affected by the current drought emergency, and will allow Save/USA to expand into 5 additional woredas experience emergency situation.

UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: Good rains have started in all drought stricken areas, except for a few pocket areas in Warder Zone of the Somali Region. Field, satellite, and station reports indicate fair to good rains during the first week of April. Unfortunately, rains have been torrential in some areas

causing flooding. Food distribution has been stopped in some woredas, namely Chereti woreda, of the Somali Region due to inaccessibility. Water tanking has stopped in almost all woredas, as some areas are inaccessible due to the rains and the rains have filled birkas and ponds. Flooding has claimed the lives of livestock and destroyed homes in parts of Afar and Borena Zone in Somali region, but estimates on the magnitude of the damage do not yet exist as this time.

Livestock deaths have increased sharply with the first rains, either due to pneumonia and other diseases or due to their stomachs not being able to digest new pasture in their weakened state. Cattle have comprised the majority of deaths, as shoats and camels have weathered the drought much better. If the rains continue, the condition of surviving livestock is expected to markedly improve.

The health sector is being monitored for disease outbreaks after the first rains. Many water points that have just refilled are contaminated with fecal matter, and there have been reports of limited bloody diarrhea in two woredas in the Somali Region. The conditions are conducive for an outbreak, but no major outbreaks have been reported at this time.

A continued focus on health and nutrition still remains a critical concern. While response actions are only just getting finalized and operational in some areas, it may be necessary to adjust these new programs towards a recovery-focused strategy. In addition, coordination of nutrition and health, water/sanitation related activities/issues need to be better coordinated with regional health authorities.

4. SOMALIA

UPDATE ON THE HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: The FEWS/FSAU Rain Watch for April 2-8 reports heavy rains over much of southern and parts of northwest Somalia. In the south, with the exception of parts of Hiran Region and Adale and Warsheikh Districts (Middle Shabele), most areas received good rains. Gedo, Middle Juba, Lower Juba, Bay and parts of Lower Shabele received heavy rains with totals of up to 70 mm. Rains replenished water sources and prompted large migrations of pastoralists from riverine and farming areas into the traditional grazing areas in the hinterland. The upper catchments of Juba and Shabele rivers in the Ethiopian highlands have also received heavy rains, increasing river levels in Somalia. Although rains were good so far, the overall performance of the rainy season will not be known until late April/early May.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: Other recent donor contributions to WFP include Canada \$1m (Canadian dollars); DFID \$5.2m; Swiss \$378,000; Norway \$200,000; Netherlands \$482,000; African Dev Bank \$500,000 (pending); and Italy US\$1.076.

UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: A multi-agency team including FSAU and FEWS conducted a nutritional survey and food security assessment March 22 - 30, in all six districts of Gedo Region. Results show a global acute malnutrition (weight for height